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ABSTRACT

This is an instruction book for the bilingual teacher of the St. Lawrence Island Yupik language. This guide accompanies the beginning primer, "Atightuaun Liitusit" ("The First Letters"). Each sound in the language has a definite letter or combination of letters that represents it. The primer presents the alphabet letter by letter, starting with the most common and using only words with letters that have already been presented. Detailed instructions for the presentation of each letter are given. (AMH)

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TEACHER'S GUIDE

to accompany

ATIGHTUMUN LIITUSIT

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INSTRUCTION BOOK FOR THE PRIMER

The St. Lawrence Island writing system is strictly according to sound (unlike English). Each sound made has a definite letter or combination of letters that represents it.

This primer is based on the frequency of letters or letter combinations used in the St. Lawrence Island Yupik language. It starts with the most common letters and ends with the least common. It presents the Yupik alphabet letter by letter this way, using only the words with letters that have already been presented.

In teaching the students literacy using this book, both the small letters (a, for example) and the capital letters (A, for example) are taught at the same time.

When teaching the class the pronunciation of each letter either of two ways may be used. One, just pronouncing the Yupik sound of the letter; two, pronouncing the given letter's sound followed by a vowel a, using St. Lawrence Island pronunciation. For example, "pa", "ta", and so on. But indicate to the children what you are doing, whichever you use. It is better to teach the children the SLI pronunciation just a letter at a time (phonetically), so that they can recognize that the sound and the symbol go together.

In using the primer, the first letter introduced is "a". The teacher tells the class that the SLI Yupik letters are going to be taught.

Teaching the letter "a"

The teacher writes the letter "a" on the chalkboard as the class watches, and pronounces the sound of it several times. Then have the class say the letter "a" together several times. Pass out ruled paper to the children and ask them to write the letter "a" several times.

The teacher may say some words that begin with an "a" (atkuk, alpa, ateq, etc.). Some items whose names begin with an "a" are illustrated in the book. Have the class think of words or names that begin with "a". Do not write words or names yet--that might confuse the children, as they have not learned the other letters yet. Let the children read the letter "a" written several times in the Primer.

Teaching the capital "A"

Now teach the children the capital "A". (Remember, just the Yupik pronunciation.) Write the capital "A" on the chalk board and explain to the class that it is also pronounced like the small "a". Explain to the class that the capital "A" is used in the beginning of names and sentences. Do not go into too much detail about how it is used yet, because this will come later in the book.

Have the children say the "A" together several times, then have them write it on ruled paper several times--enough so they are able to write it without difficulty. They may say names of people or places that begin with capital "A" to help them relate the sound to the capital letter. Let the children read the "A" in the Primer.

How often you introduce and teach new letters depends on how fast the students learn. Normally two or three new letters can be taught in a week. If the letter is simple to learn, go quickly on to the next letter. But if the letter is difficult to learn and write, especially when more than one letter are used to represent a sound (such as gh or ghh), take more time with these until the children are more familiar with them.

If you prefer, you can follow the system of reviewing learned sounds and symbols as presented in the book. But reviewing can also be set up by the teacher according to the needs of the class.

Teaching the letter "t"

Write the "t" on the chalk board and pronounce it to the class in Siberian Yupik. The pronunciation, as you remember, is in between the English "t" and "d", as in "tepaq". Do not say the English name of the letter itself, just the Yupik pronunciation. Then give the children examples of words that begin with the letter "t". Illustrations of objects whose names begin with "t" appear in the book for examples. Have the children read the several "t"'s in the Primer. Then have them write the letter "t" on ruled paper for practice.

Teaching the capital "T"

Explain to the children that the "T" is pronounced the same as "t". As in "A", the "T" is used at the beginning of names.

Have the children read the several "T"'s in the Primer, then let them write several "T"'s on ruled paper.

The First Written Word

On page 3, a first word is written using the two symbols learned, "a" and "t", forming the word "ata".

Write the word "ata" on the board and say it to the class and have them say it out loud. Remind them of the symbols "a" and "t" which they learned to pronounce and write--and now they can form a word using them.

Have the children read page 3. Then let them practice writing the word "ata" a few times on ruled paper.

Immediately after that, or as soon as the children are familiar with the word "ata", introduce the word "atat" on page 4. Have the children read page 4 and then practice writing.

There are illustrations on every page. The illustrations on the pages where the letter is being introduced are only examples for words that begin with a particular letter. They are not for writing, because the other letters in the words may not have been taught yet. The words that appear underneath the illustrations are the ones to be taught.

Teaching the symbol "aa"

Remind the children of the pronunciation of the single "a". Then explain to them that there is a stressed or long "aa" sound and write the symbol on the board-- "aa". Pronounce it several times. Have the children repeat the sound several times and read page 5. Then have them write "aa" on ruled paper.

On page 5, the rule for the capital "aa" is different. Since we cannot write two capitals--"AA"--at the beginning of a name or place, only the first "a" is a capital, so the symbol is "Aa". Write the symbol "Aa" on the board and pronounce it to

the children. Then have them pronounce it. Say a few names or places that begin with "Aa" to familiarize the class with it. Then have the children practice writing the "Aa" several times on ruled paper.

On page 6 is practice in word reading. Again explain to the children that a word can be formed using "aa". The reading and writing exercise on page 6 is good to show the children the difference in pronouncing "a" and "aa". Create more practice on your own for this. Some children have a problem in telling the difference in length when pronouncing the long and short vowels.

Each new word should be written on the board and pronounced by the teacher and repeated out loud by the class. Page 7 has a new word. Write it on the board and pronounce it, then have the children pronounce it.

Introducing "n" and "N"

Follow the same procedure for teaching the "a" and "A".

On page 9, "naa" is written. Write it on the board and pronounce it to the class, then have them pronounce the word. Then let the children write the word "naa" on ruled paper for practice.

The first sentence is introduced on page , using only the letters that have been learned so far: "Naanta naa?" Remind the children about when the capital letter is used--in this case, at the beginning of a sentence. Write "Naanta naa?"

on the chalk board and point out to the children that the word "Naanta" has a large (capital) letter. "Large letter", "ineghllak", is the Yupik expression used to identify a capital letter. "Naanta" begins with a capital letter because it is the first word in the sentence.

Punctuation Marks

Punctuation marks can be introduced as they come up, because it would be confusing to the children if they were all taught at one time, apart from actual use in sentences.

Since children notice most everything, they are likely to notice the question mark in "Naanta naa?", and some probably will ask what it is. Explain to the children that this symbol is put at the end of a question, as in "Naanta naa?"

Do not expect the children to remember the use of the question mark yet, because it will come later and be concentrated on then. But it's good to mention it now. Then it will be familiar to them later.

Have the children read page 9 and do some writing practice on ruled sheets.

Do reading and writing practice on page 10 as done on previous pages of reading and writing.

The following pages, up to a page before the review, are pretty much the same as previous pages: Introduce a new letter, say words that begin with the new letter, and do writing practice on it.

Word or reading pages

Always write on the board first, say the word, have the children repeat the word out loud, then have them do writing practice on ruled paper. Except for the illustrations that appear in the same pages where a new letter is being introduced--those illustrations are only to suggest examples of words that begin with the new letter and that can be said orally.

Teaching "i" and "ii"

For the "i" and "ii", teach them the same way you taught "a" and "aa".

Again briefly point out to the children another punctuation mark, the period, on page 16. Explain to them that the symbol is put at the end of a sentence. (Akuzillghem naangneghani.)

Review: Page 20

List the words on the chalk board from the book and see if the children can read them without your help. If they need help, you should help the children.

You may either write the sentences on the board for the children to read, or have the children read directly from their books.

Have the children do writing practice on these sentences on ruled paper.

The following pages are pretty much the same. Use the same format and style as with previous pages in teaching each new

sound and symbol. In reviews, the word list and phrases may either be written on the chalk board for reading, or they may be read out loud directly from the books by the children.

Difference between K and Q

Children might get mixed up with the "k" and "q". They might write "kikmik" for "qikmiq". Some may get mixed up in pronouncing them. If they get confused with these symbols, do practice reading words that contain both symbols. Words like these can be helpful: qikmiq, qaneq, qanik, qatek, keniq. You may find more helpful words, but be careful not to choose words containing letters that have not been introduced yet.

Introducing "gh"

Several single letters have been combined to form two-letter symbols which represent particular sounds. Examples: "g" plus "h" for "gh", "n" and "g" for "ng", "w" and "h" for "wh", etc.

This is the first time two different letters (consonants) appear together to form one sound-symbol. In teaching children the Yupik alphabet, we teach only the sound of the symbol and how to write it--we do not say the English letter names. So we teach this new symbol as "gh" (Yupik pronunciation), not as "g and h". (Actually saying the English names of the alphabet letters comes when the children learn the English alphabet.)

Write the symbol "gh" on the board and pronounce it to the children. Have them pronounce it several times. Say some word examples that begin with "gh" or contain "gh": gheva, ghevumaaq, ghevesta, aghnaq, aghneq.

When you teach the capital "Gh", explain to the children that only the first letter is capitalized in "Gh".

Proceed as before. Now that there are a number of letters or symbols learned, the children should be given worksheets on matching words and illustrations:

ata

pana

qikmiq

Have the children draw a line from each word to the matching drawing.

There are several symbols in the St. Lawrence Island language that are not used at the beginning of words. When such a symbol is to be taught, teach the sound of it first, then say words that contain that particular symbol. Examples: f, afsengaq, aflu, ifkaq; z, ukaziq, uzivuq; and so on.

In reviews, have the children read the list of words and the short phrases. Make your own list of words for practice and review, but do not use any letters that have not been introduced yet. You may want to dictate sounds and have the class write them down. Actual spelling of words may be a little too hard for them at this time. But if the children are ready for simple spelling, dictation may be given to them using single letter symbols.